NOW NOW

Act 4

int healthclub he's prone on bench lifting and she's stretching. Chorus is a male and female instructor who work with them throughout.

Male Victim (sobs)
But you used to!

Female Patsy (comforting)
Now now.

Male Victim
How quickly people forget.

Female Patsy
I am not people.

Male Victim
Might as well be.

Female Patsy
Too ridiculous.

Male Victim
Well it means a lot to me!

Female Patsy
Out of the question.

Male Victim
Why live? Why even live?

Female Patsy
Now now.

Male Victim
Such a small thing I ask. So small!

Female Patsy
Now now.

Male Victim
I would.

Female Patsy
No longer appropriate, that's all. Not that it was wrong when--

Male Victim

Appropriate! Great God! Was Romeo and Juliet appropriate? How can you even say that? Get the word into your mouth?

Female Patsy
Easily.

Male Victim

And what I'm asking isn't easy?

Female Patsy

Right now I couldn't think of anything more difficult or more ridiculous. (nodding to instructors) Public even.

Female ins

That's cuz you're not doing it right.

Male Victim

Shit! I've just been fooling myself. You don't love me and never have.

Female Patsy

Perhaps. That is...of course I--some moments I sincerely do and at others--?

Male Victim

Unconstant in a wink and therefore fickle forever!

Female Patsy

Not heard that.

Male Victim

I made it up!

Male ins

Right. Five more reps the way I showed you. Don't make nothing up. You could get hurt!

Female Patsy

Not bad.

Male Victim

Fritter fritter fritter. Oh yes! To your advantage. The delay card, always the delay card.

Female Patsy

Now now.

Male Victim

Please?

Female Patsy

You know my feeling on this. What was appropriate, what seemed right, uh, before, now simply isn't. How much of an asshole do you want? People move on!

Male Victim

You'd say Love is an asshole!

Female Patsy

Now now. Uh, run that by me again, will you?

Male Victim

Fuck you!

Female Patsy

Very well then, fuck me.

Male ins

Now now, we try to talk clean in the club.

Male Victim

And not in the way you mean.

Female Patsy

I don't mean it in the way that I mean.

Male Victim

Language! Your downfall! Thinking that it means anything.

Female Patsy

Caught you in a paradox there. What you want me to say means volumes evidently, and yet language itself means nothing, from Shakespeare to to Whipped and Sodomized by Martian Nazisa Globe exclusive.

Male Victim (frosty)

I wouldn't know.

Male Ins

I don't believe half those articles.

Female Ins

They can't say it unless it's so.

Female Patsy Now now.

Male ins (to female ins)

How naive can you get?

Female

Wait a little minute! Females get many more of the stupid lines in these stupid plays!

Male ins (shrugs)

I got no complaints.

Male Victim (Cracking)

Jesus Christ! Do you want all my dignity? Don't you realize I'm out here with my very heart on the block, that I've gone too far out. Please, leave me some little self respect! Please! (slides off bench to sink to floor) I am begging you! (thrashing about) Begging you! I am begging you! (thrashingabout the floor) Begging you!

Female ins

I knew that Couples Only promotion was a bummer!

Female Patsy (avoiding pursuit while appealing with several now-now pantomimes for instructors' response)

Instructors

Now now! (Theygrab him and exercise his arms and legs.)

Male Victim (nevertheless all but tackling PATSY)

Well? (retching) (Instructors stop)

Male Ins

What do you want? Word count? Quota?

Female ins

Nothing. You all lie any which way.

Female Patsy

Oh very well!

Male Victim (leaping up, considerably brightened)

Yes! Yes!

Female Patsy (muttered)

You are my--

Male Victim

Speak up! Don't always mumble!

Female Patsy

(inaudible)

Male Victim

Whaaaaaa?

Female Patsy

I said...you are my Bumpty-Wumpy.

Female ins

At least I'm glad I didn't have to say that!

Male Victim (collapsing) (to Instructors)

But like a DENtist I had to-- Like a dentist...ex-TRACTING! Just to save the smallest sliver of face! A dentist! The tiniest, WINE-EEEEEEEEEEE-ist slivvvvvvvvv-er of face! (inarticulate whining follows)

Female Patsy

(mouthing now now to chorus. They respond by treating the equipment in a manner most wild.)

Instructors (mechanical)

Now now.

Scene 2 int Bowling alley

Male Victim

Has it been a year?

Female Patsy (toasting empty glass)

Reason for all this expensive food (holds up bag of potato chips)

Male Victim

All Hoboken wouldn't be enough--what I put up with.

All China wouldn't be enough--what I put up with.

Female Patsy

Uh, um, yes, uh, more champaigne, dear? (offers bottle of beer)

Male Victim

Not trying to get me drunk? Of course you don't have to anymore. Performance on demand, isn't that it? None of the playing, andthe lovely Bumpty Wumpy I so loved. Never more of that of course.

Female Patsy

I must've come in late.

Male Victim

Just because we're ... doesn't lift the obligation of...to--

Female Patsy

I'm missing something. Gifts you mean? Hallmark? What?

Male Victim

I mean an attitude! (racking sobs)

Female Patsy

Now now.

Male Victim

(continues a sort of combined crying and inarticulate whining, and so PATSY, draining bottle, exhorts other bowlers to now-now)

ms of individual bowlers will ball now nowing. They have flashy shirts with individual names embroidered.
Now now etc.

Bald Bowler

Now now sweetie!

Scene 3 In den with their accountant doing taxes, an emergency has come up.

Male Victim (frantically paging through book)

Why should we trust this Dr Spock? He probably wants to make all the babies Communist or something!

Female Patsy

Now now.

Accountant

He was never pro business.

Male Victim

Wha--what am I looking up here? You both made me forget.

Female Patsy

Now now just take it easy.

Male Victim

Easy for you to say. You just bebop through life and I'm left--

Accountant

Accurate records are so important. Why can't people realize that?

Female Patsy

Green.

Male Victim

Ugh!

Female Patsy

Well it looked green.

Male Victim

Green what?

Female Patsy

Vomit, diar--

Accountant

Never mind! Numbers, numbers! This all the cancelled checks?

Male Victim

Which one goddammit. You are infuriating as always!

Female Patsy
Now now. It's probably normal.

Male Victim
Well you're not!

Female Patsy

Now now.

Male Victim

My life is going out the window! Out the fuckin window and into the toilet!

Female Patsy

Impossible. Uh, spacially. Not logical. 'd have to come back INto the window in order to

Male Victim (aside)

Only a couple of years and this boring!

Accountant

I don't find her so. If it's whoopie doo whoopie doo all the time, then nobody gets their taxes done!

Female Patsy (to accountant)

Now now. (to Victim) Now now.

Male Victim

ExHAUSted all the goddamn time and you're no help!
Is this a murder plot? Have you come that far? Push the kid onto me and then watch me disintegrate until--

Female Patsy

Now now.

Male Victim

I can't take it anymore. I can't! The baby's defective and the relationship is worse. And I'm gone. I'm really gone!

Female Patsy

(starts exhorting accountant to nownow.)

Accountant
Uh now now, uh, the two of you DO pay me by the hour you know.

Male Victim (to accountant)

No no! Stop! I mean it. I'm-- I-- I-- I have to get out of here or lose what little sanity--(throws hands to face and trembles)

Female Patsy

Now now now now now!

Accountant

Next time you'llhave to come into the office.

Scene 4 at kitchen table while plumber works in bathroom

frequent flushes

Male Victim

If it's Consolidated comes in, and not Allied, then I'm gone for sure.

Female Patsy

Now now. It's not that bad. Lots of ads in the paper.

Male Victim

Propaganda I tell you! Did you know that the youngsters at work call me the old timer? Jesus Christ I'm losing it! I gave my fuckin youth to this lousy relationship and that stupid company!

Female Patsy

Now now.

Male Victim

What an asshole!

Female Patsy

Please. No name-calling. Remember what the counselor told us.

Male Victim

I'm the asshole! Sacrificing so so much for that company and for what? So they could get a deal! Selling it to somebody who'll fire me outright! And they stole the whole fuckin pension plan I contributed to, and they're saying not to worry, that they just reallocated the funds.

Female Patsy

Now now. It's only money.

Plumber (entering)

Only WHAT? (He brandishes large rightangled pipe.) Somebody sits too hard on that pot in there.

Male Victim

Huh! They piss in your pocket and tell you you're sweating!

Female Patsy

Are they really that unhygenic?

Plumber

The plumber protects the health of the nation!

Male Victim

And this whole crazy business here in this insane house is just a mirror image of the outside. You're screwed every moment of your life! You're screwed every moment of your life!

Plumber

Now now.

Female Patsy

Just lucky I guess.

Male Victim

That does it! I'm getting out and this time I mean it! (exits)

Female Patsy (exiting after Victim)
Now now. (exhorts Plumber too)

Plumber

I already did but okay. Life is short. Now now.

Male Victim (popping back)

Yeah! Uh huh! You all know what you can do with your stupid now nows!

Plumber

No, now! Wait a minute! I wanna show you this here pipe. New one's gonna cost you ten big ones and seventeen.

Male Victim (exits) Yeah! Uh huh! (off) You know what you can do with your stupid pipe.

Patsy

ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEEN...? For a pipe?

Plumber

Double it with the labor tossed in. It's from a really weird place.

Patsy

Aren't we all?

Scene 5 Male Victim alone, w potted palm. Gets, up , waters it.

Enter Hippie (opposite sex live-in) eating from a can and then throwing can away. A WOMAN SITS ON THE SOFA AND SMILES THROUGHOUT

Male Victim

As I was saying, that person--

Female Hippie (burps, wipes face on sleeve) Yeah...like well it's tough.

Male Victim

--took my dignity away. I begged and begged. Until I became less than human.

Female Hippie

Yeah, uh, like--

Male Victim

Believe me there was no extent I wouldn't go to. It became harrowing and utltimately disgusting. Ugh! Just disgusting! Ihhhh! Slime you turn into! Doormat! Wipe your feet on me, or or or anything more disgusting.

Female Hippie

Yeah like well it's tough.

Male Victim

My life is gone. Gone! Kaput! I've ruined it. I mean it was ruined for me. A lot of people cooperated on that little project, you can bet your ass on that one! Not just old whats-hisname.

Female Hippie

Yeah like well it's tough.

Male Victim

And what...was left? The horrible, insidious memories of

COMFORTING! (Here a manic walk in which now-nows in every possible intonation are mocked.) Now now (etc) (knocks plants over. Chorus follows her, mocks her mocking intonations.

Female Hippie

(interjects a word at a time into above speeches)
Yeah...well...like...tough.

Male Victim (breathless)

Such minimal, miserable attempts at being a human being! (to chorus) Such minimal, miserable attempts at being human beings! (They respond with the finger. One flings a plant but is wide of the mark.)

Female Hippie

Yeah...well, like I said, it's tough.

Male Victim

And what's left? What's left now? (clumps down to knees) (to audience) Oh Sweet Merciful God, what is left?

Female Hippie

You got any fuckin money?

Patsy from previous scene enters. The three look to seated woman as if for prompts)

Woman

All right. Are you finished? I'm comfortable that this is the approporiate time when you are most comfortable, or as comfortable as you can get for the time being. Now let's talk about all of this. The dynamics of couples, of triangles. It was my disseration.

(The three of them give her the finger and exit and she resumes smiling.)

(cont) Very well then. You are not entirely comfortable with listening, but I will proceed. Schwartzman and O'Donnell in their groundbreaking study of couples of every sexual

configuration found what you might expect. The best studies do. It's more comfortable that way.

Now with the female victim and the male patsy (inarticulate babble , as and we see actors who played in 1st act, their names supered under)

Additionally with the male victim and the male patsy ...(those two actors shown etc)

while a definite contrast sharpens with the female victim and the female patsy

(...those two actors etc)

and in conclusion, in perhaps the most definitive statement concerning the entire dynamic we are presented with the male victim and the female patsy.

(...those two actors etc)
Of course such neurotic behavior has its dysfunctional supporters!

(...rest of super credits roll by. She smiles, gets up, starts removing her clothes. Go to black at right teaser moment very sexy)

Now! Which of you wimps is brave enough for the deepest therapy?